

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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TAGS: EGEN, JA, AS

SUBJ: JAPANESE REACTION TO AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT CHANGE

REF: CANBERRA 8409

1. WHILE OFFICIAL GOJ REACTION TO AUSTRALIAN ELECTIONS WAS LIMITED TO CABINET SECRETARY IDE'S STATEMENT AFFIRMING CONTINUATION OF CORDIAL RELATIONS, BOTH FONOFF AND MINISTRY OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND INDUSTRY (MITI) OFFICIALS INDICATED THAT GOJ LEADERSHIP IS PLEASED WITH L-NCP VICTORY. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS WITH EMBOFF, GOJ REPS MAKITA, OCEANIA SECTION, FONOFF AND ARIA, AMERICAS-OCEANIA DIV., MITI SAID GOJ AND BUSINESS COMMUNITY HOPE THAT WORLD ECONOMIC RECOVERY WILL BLUNT FRASER GOVERNMENT'S PROTECTIONIST INCLINATIONS AND EXPECT A MORE BUSINESS-LIKE APPROACH FROM IT TO INVESTMENT ISSUES AND RAW MATERIALS CONTRACTS THAN WAS CHARACTERISTIC OF ALP.

2. REX CONNOR'S INTERVENTION IN EXPORT PRICE NEGOTIATIONS, MITI REP. ACKNOWLEDGED, HAD BECOME SOURCE OF VEXATION TO JAPANESE FIRMS AND CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT OFFERS HOPE

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THAT GOA WILL HENCEFORTH TAKE A MORE UNDERSTANDING VIEW

OF COMMERICAL ASPECTS OF COMMODITY TRANSACTIONS.
FONOFF OFFICIAL ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT HE ANXIOUS LEST
JAPANESE BUSINESS COMMUNITY OVERREACT TO CONSERVATIVE
VICTORY AND FAIL TO GIVE DUE REGARD TO THE NATIONALISTIC
CORE OF THE L-NCP OUTLOOK. HE NOTED THAT WITH DIFFICULT
PROBLEMS AHEAD OVER CUTBACKS IN JAPANESE CONTRACT
IMPORTS OF SUGAR AND STEEL RAW MATERIALS, INSENSITIVE
BEHAVIOR BY FIRMS INVOLVED COULD DAMPEN NEW GOVERNMENT'S
GOODWILL.

3. CONCERNING NARA TREATY, ARAI SAID HE THOUGHT L-NCP
GOVERNMENT WOULD TAKE A FAVORABLE VIEW OF THE BASIC
OUTLINE AND THAT MUCH OF IT HAS A CHANCE OF SURVIVING
UNDER A NEW NAME. L-NCP, HE SUGGESTED, MIGHT EVEN BE
MORE AMENABLE TO PRAGMATIC COMPROMISE ON MFN DEFINITION
THAN WHITLAM GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN.

4. AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY ADVISED IT EXPECTS EARLY FRASER
VISIT TO JAPAN.
HODGSON

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